CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of authenticating ~~an end-user client~~end-user clients requiring access to services available in a computer-based communication system, comprising the steps of:

        a) at an authentication server connected in said communication system, defining a list of authentication modules available in said communication system, and mapping said authentication modules to authenticating domain identifiers associated to end-user clients of said authentication server;

        ~~a)~~b) sending, by ~~the~~an end-user client, ~~an authenticating~~a respective authentication domain identifier to ~~an~~said authentication server;

        ~~b)~~c) creating, by the authentication server and depending on the authentication domain identifier, an authentication stack specific to said end-user client, said stack comprising one or more stack entries, each mapped to a respective authentication module;

        ~~c)~~d) rendering, for each stack entry and depending thereon, an authentication service provided at said respective authentication module to produce an authentication result for that entry; and

        ~~d)~~e) consolidating authentication results to obtain an authentication status for the end-user client.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1 wherein the authentication domain identifier identifies an application service ID.

3.   (Canceled)

4.   (Original) The method as defined in claim 1 wherein the authentication service includes local and remote services.

5.   (Original) The method as defined in claim 4 wherein the local and remote services include but are not limited to biometric schemes, cryptographic hardware services, smart cards and USB tokens.

6.   (Currently Amended) The method as defined in claim 1 further comprising, sending a unique session identifier to the end-user client ~~wherein~~ responsive to an authentication status corresponding to a successful authentication, ~~a unique session ID is sent to the end-user client~~.

7.   (Original) A system for authenticating an end-user client in a computer-based communication system comprising:

means, at the end-user client, for sending an authenticating domain identifier to an authentication server;

means, at the authentication server and depending on the authentication domain

- 8 -

identifier, for creating an authentication stack comprising one or more stack entries;

means for rendering, for each stack entry and depending thereon, an authentication service to produce an authentication result for that entry; and

means for consolidating authentication results to obtain an authentication status for the end-user client.

8.   (Original) The system as defined in claim 7 wherein the authentication identifies an application ID

9.   (Original) The system as defined in claim 8 wherein the authentication server, dependent on the application ID, retrieves a configuration specifying how to create the authentication stack.

10.   (Original) The system as defined in claim 7 wherein the authentication service includes local and remote services.

11.   (Original) The system as defined in claim 7 wherein the local and remote services include biometric schemes, cryptographic hardware services, smart cards and USB tokens.

12.   (Original) The system as defined in claim 7 wherein responsive to an authentication status corresponding to a successful authentication, a unique session ID is sent to the end-user client.